

Washington State Patrol Media Release

Chief John R. Batiste



Captain Jeff DeVere
Government and Media Relations
(360) 753-5299 – office
(360) 753-5469 – fax
<http://www.wsp.wa.gov>

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Date: March 24, 2008
Contact: Trooper Mark Baker
Phone: (509) 993-2946
Email: Mark.Baker@wsp.wa.gov

Operation Lifesaver Enforcement Program

Officer on a Train

On March 27, 2008 Spokane Police Department, Spokane County Sheriff's Office, Washington State Patrol and Burlington Northern Santa Fe law enforcement officers will be conducting an "Officer on a Train" enforcement operation. The purpose of this multiagency enforcement effort is to increase public awareness of the dangers that exist at railroad crossings. Officers hope to eliminate driver actions that can have tragic consequences by enforcing traffic laws pertaining to these railroad crossings.

During the "Officer on a Train" enforcement runs, one officer will ride in the lead locomotive of the train as a spotter. The officer will monitor traffic approaching the highway/railroad crossings as the train approaches the intersection. When a motorist is observed violating the laws pertaining to highway/railroad crossings, the officer on the train will radio one of the patrol officers, who will stop the motorist and take the appropriate enforcement action.

In Washington during 2007, there were 47 car train collisions resulting in seven fatalities and 13 people injured. Ten pedestrians were killed and 17 injured while trespassing on railroad property.

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